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❀ 10 ❀

MANUSCRIPTS AND LIBRARIES: SCRIPTORIAL ACTIVITY IN CILICIA

Bernard Coulie

The preservation and dissemination of information regarding Armenian manuscripts represents a major challenge for Armenian historiography. This survey considers the Armenian manuscripts (relevant to Armenian history, culture, and literature) from Cilicia preserved in public and private libraries worldwide. Extensive research yields about 315 libraries or collections with one or more Armenian items, with a total of some 31,000 Armenian manuscripts.[1] Here, the focus is on the Cilician manuscripts copied between the late eleventh and fourteenth century.

The dating of a manuscript depends on the information provided by the manuscript itself, especially in a section of the text referred to in Armenian as the *hishatakaran* (colophon). This appended text usually contains names and information related to the date and place of copying, the circumstances surrounding the production of the work, and the names of patrons or commissioners of the manuscript. These characteristics of colophons have been analyzed by Avedis Sanjian and others.[2] This discussion con-

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[1] Bernard Coulie, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits arméniens* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992); idem, "Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits arméniens. Supplément I," *Le Muséon* 108 (1995): 115-30; idem, "Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits arméniens. Supplément II," *Le Muséon* 113 (2000): 149-76; idem, "Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits arméniens. Supplément III," *Le Muséon* 117 (2004): 473-96.

[2] Avedis K. Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1361-1480: A Source for Middle Eastern History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969). See also idem, "The Historical Significance of the Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts," *Le Muséon* 81 (1968):181-95; Michael E. Stone, "Colophons in Armenian Manuscripts," in *Scribi e colofoni: le sottoscrizioni di copisti dalle origini all'avvento della*

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centrates on those manuscripts considered as Cilician based on the data presented in the colophons and attempts to delineate the main characteristics of the scriptorial activity in Armenian Cilicia. This in turn might help to identify as Cilician a number of other manuscripts lacking colophons.

A Historical Survey

In her monumental study on the illuminated manuscripts from Cilicia published in 1993, Sirarpie Der Nersessian analyzed a collection of about 150 manuscripts, a small portion of the material available. Among the 31,000 surviving Armenian manuscripts, approximately 25,000 have been catalogued. For this survey, a systematic search through catalogues that include 22,000 manuscripts has identified some 530 manuscripts that may be labeled with certainty as Cilician and whose colophons date their production between the late eleventh century and end of the fourteenth century. The colophons record the names of the scribes, painters, and patrons, and often the names of the scriptoria. These 530 manuscripts represent less than 2.5 percent of the 22,000 items under examination. Among the 11,000 manuscripts in the Matenadaran (Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts) in Erevan, about 10 percent date to the twelfth through fourteenth centuries.[3] Considering the number of scriptoria known to have been active outside Cilicia during that period, it seems reasonable to estimate that about 1,500 items may be of Cilician origin.

Among the earliest Cilician manuscripts is a *Kanonagirk* (Book of Canons) copied in 1098 by the scribe Hovhannes in "Parlahu anapat" or "Parlahu vank," a monastic center located in the Black

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stampa: atti del seminario di Erice, X Colloquio del Comité international de paléographie latine, 23-28 ottobre 1993, ed. Emma Condello and Giuseppe De Gregorio (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 1995), pp. 463-71; Gérard Dédéyan, "Les colophons de manuscrits arméniens comme sources pour l'histoire des Croisades," in *The Crusades and Their Sources: Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, ed. John France and William G. Zajac (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1998), pp. 89-110.

[3] The twelfth century manuscripts represent 0.65 percent of the total; the thirteenth century manuscripts, 3.85 percent; and the fourteenth century manuscripts, 6.25 percent. The vast majority of Armenian manuscripts are from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Mountain in the region near Antioch.[4] As to whether this area belonged to Cilicia at that time, the scribe Hovhannes mentions in his colophon the "regions of the Cilicians and of the Syrians" as his own country.[5] A Gospel book (Matenadaran, MS 311) was copied in 1066 at Sebastia but contains two folios illuminated at Hromkla, just to the east of Cilicia proper. These folios were added in the Sebastia manuscript at a later date, at the latest in 1194, probably at the request of Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali (Nerses the Gracious), when he offered the Gospel to his nephew Grigor Apirat (colophon, folio 219v).[6]

Apart from these peculiar cases, the two earliest dated Cilician manuscripts came from the scriptorium of Drazark: 1) a Gospel book (Matenadaran, MS 6763), the only known illustrated work from the first half of the twelfth century, copied in 1113 by the scribe Gevorg (George) for the vardapet Kirakos;[7] and 2) a col-

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[4] New Julfa, Church of All Savior, MS 131, catalogue 542; Michel Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993), p. 52 (MS 273). The *Kanonagirk* is manuscript A used by Vazgen Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk Hayots* [Gospel Books of the Armenians] (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1964), pp. lix-lxi. Manuscripts are presented here according to the system of abbreviations suggested by the authors and published in Bernard Coulie, *Répertoire des manuscrits armé-niens: Liste des sigles utilisés pour désigner les manuscrits arméniens*, now available at http://aiea.fltr.ucl.ac.be, under Tools.

[5] Text in Smbat Ter-Avetissian, *Katalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Bibliothek des Klosters in Neu-Djoulfa*, I (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1970), pp. 814-17. The colophon is reproduced also in Artashes Matevosyan, *Hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner V-XII dd.* [Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 5th-12th Centuries] (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1988), pp. 117-19.

[6] Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1993), pp. 13-14. According to Hamazasp Oskian, *Katalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Mechitharisten-Bibliothek zu Wien*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1963), pp. 147-48, a seventeenth or eighteenth century prayer book called *Narek*, from Vienna (codex 659 of the Mekhitarist Library), contains a pergament flyleaf presenting the text of a colophon from a Gospel book copied in the year 1049, in Edessa, at the request of Stepanos "from the monastery of Tsovuts [Tsovk?] close to the limits of the citadel which is called Hromkla," but this might be the result of a misreading, inasmuch as Nerses Akinian ("Magaghateay avetarani me hishatakarann," *Handes amsorya* 22 (1908): 62-63) dates it to 1149 rather than 1049.

[7] T.A. Izmailova, "Master i obrazets: Romklaiskaia model', vtoraia polovina XII-nachalo XIII veka" [Master and Specimen: The Hromkla Model, Second Half of the 12th-Beginning of the 13th Century], *Patma-banasirakan handes*, no. 3 (1989): 174-91.

lection of scientific works (Bzommar Monastery, MS 204), copied ten years later, in 1123, by the priest Tadeos.[8] Activities of the scriptorium at Drazark lasted until 1331.

Hromkla, after it became the catholicosal seat in 1151, and Skevra emerged as the most important centers for the copying of manuscripts during this period. The earliest dated manuscripts from Hromkla and Skevra were copied in 1166 (Matenadaran, MS 7347) and in 1154 (Matenadaran, MS 832), respectively. The latter is one of only five known copies of the Armenian *Chashots* (Lexionary) from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[9] Other Cilician scriptoria centers, too, appeared in the second half of the twelfth century, as in Sis (Encyclical Letter of Nerses Shnorhali, copied in 1169-70, Matenadaran, MS 3906); Mlich (Gospel book from the year 1183, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 3133); Mashkevor (Gospel book from the year 1187, New Julfa, Church of All Savior, folio 56); Poghoskan, a hermitage near Hromkla (Gospel book copied in 1193, Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, MS 538); and Tarsus (works of Ephrem the Syrian, copied by Nerses Lambronatsi, in 1195, Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 312/1551). Ephrem's *Targmanutiun avetarani* (Translation of the Gospel), preserved in this Venice manuscript, appears in another manuscript copied, also in 1195, at Haghbat.[10]

All of these early manuscripts contain a series of ingredients, among other iconographic elements, which were later to become characteristic of Cilician productions. These included ornate initials, symbols of the evangelists, and marginal ornaments. The above-mentioned scriptoria appear to have been part of a single school of thought, as some scribes or painters traveled from one center to the other. Grigor, for instance, copied Grigor Narekatsi's *Matean oghbergutian* (Book of Lamentation) at Skevra in 1173 for Nerses of Lambron (Matenadaran, MS 1568), and a few months later he copied a Gospel at Hromkla for Nerses Shnor-

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[8] The manuscript contains among other texts the Geography (*Ashkharhatsoyts*) traditionally attributed to Movses Khorenatsi and pieces pertaining to the calendar; cf. Mesrop Keschischian, *Katalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Bibliothek des Klosters Bzommar* (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1964), pp. 486-95.

[9] Charles Renoux, *Le lectionnaire de Jérusalem en Arménie: Le Tchashots*, vol. 1: *Introduction et liste des manuscrits* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989), pp. 38ff.

[10] George A. Egan, ed., *Saint Ephrem: An Exposition of the Gospel* (Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus S.C.O., 1968), p. iv.

hali. As Sirarpie Der Nersessian has shown, it was at Skevra that another Grigor completed a Gospel book he had begun in the Monastery of Mlich. This manuscript, formerly kept at the Armenian archbishopric of Lvov, disappeared after World War II, and its location was still unknown to Der Nersessian in 1993.[11] It has only recently been rediscovered in the archiepiscopal archives of Gniezno, Poland, and published by Günter Prinzing and Andrea Schmidt.[12]

Most scriptoria centers flourishing in the last quarter of the twelfth century remained active during the thirteenth century. Analyzing the illuminations, Der Nersessian concluded that, because of the political circumstances, some places, like Skevra, "ceased to play a major role in the artistic life of Cilicia."[13] Copying nevertheless continued in those centers, and at least twenty dated manuscripts copied in Skevra during the thirteenth century are preserved. New names appear among the scriptoria, like the hermitage of Tagvor near Mamistra (Gospel book copied in 1223, Church of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, Istanbul, MS 35) and the Monastery of Arkakaghin (Gospel book copied in 1220, first dated manuscript, New Julfa, Surb Astvatsatsin, 547). Manuscripts were also copied in some centers situated outside the boundaries of Cilician Armenia proper. Three Gospel books copied in the Monastery of Hisvants vank, in the Black Mountain region near Antioch, are dated 1216, 1219, and 1231 (New Julfa, Surb Minas, MS 414; Princeton University Library, MS 74; and Matenadaran, MS 6519, respectively).[14] The Monastery of Zarnuk in the same region also produced a fine ordination book, copied and illustrated in 1248 (Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 1657).[15] Most of these manuscripts repeat Cilician patterns.

Hromkla represented one of the foremost scriptoria and artistic centers, especially after the election of Catholicos Kostandin I

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[11] Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, p. 16.

[12] Günter Prinzing and Andrea Schmidt, eds., *Das Lemberger Evangeliar: Eine wiederentdeckte armenische Bilderhandschrift des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1997).

[13] Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, p. 36.

[14] Thierry, *Répertoire*, p. 53 (MS 280).

[15] The monastery was located in or in the vicinity of Melitenia (Malatia), according to *Gli Armeni in Italia. Venezia-Padova, 9 sett.-20 gennaio 1991* (n.p.: 1991), pp. 89, 151.

(1221-67). Among the thirty-five Cilician manuscripts dated to the period of his patriarchal reign, at least fifteen were copied at Hromkla. The names of several scribes and painters are recorded in the colophons:

Scribe Kirakos, copier of the following Gospel books:
1244 (Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 69/151);
1248 (Catholicosate of Cilicia, Antelias, MS 8);
1249 (Matenadaran, MS 7690);
Undated (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, MS 613);
Undated (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, MS 558).

Scribe and painter Sargis:
Ordination book (ascribed), 1248, Zarnuk (Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 1657, year 1248);
Gospel book, 1251 (Matenadaran, MS 3033).[16]

Scribe Hovhannes:
Gospel book, 1253 (Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, MS 44.17).

Scribe and painter Toros Roslin (Hromkla and Sis):
Chashots, 1266, Sis and Hromkla (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 2027);
The following Gospel books:
1256, Hromkla (Matenadaran, MS 10450);
1260, Hromkla (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 251);
1262, Hromkla (Walters Art Gallery, MS 539);
1262, Sis (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 2660);
1265, Hromkla (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS1956);
Before 1268, Hromkla (Matenadaran, MS 10675 [formerly Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 3627]);
Undated and Attributed (Matenadaran, MS 8321);
Undated, Hromkla (Matenadaran, MS 5458);
Undated, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, MS 32.18).[17]

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[16] See, for instance, Astghik Gevorgyan, "Sargis Tsaghkogh (XIII d.)," *Banber Matenadarani* 10 (1971): 151-59.

[17] Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, pp. 51-56.

The capture of Hromkla by the Mamluks in 1292 marked the end of the scriptorial activity at the catholicosal see. A copy of Nerses Lambronatsi's commentary on some books of the Old Testament by the scribe Margarik is dated 1292 (Matenadaran, MS 4211), but Hromkla does not appear again as a place of copy until 1357 in a Gospel book (Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 1012/141). As Mamluk military campaigns against Mamistra, Sis, Adana, Ayas, and Tarsus intensified during the second half of the thirteenth century, the monastic centers located in the northern mountainous districts, which were sheltered from those incursions, progressively developed as productive scriptoria. The monastic complex of Grner comprised several workshops and became prominent under the abbacy of Hovhannes *arkayeghbayr* (brother of the king), the younger half-brother of King Hetum I.[18]

Hovhannes appears as one of the first philologist-librarians of Cilician Armenia, with an insatiable interest in texts and illuminated manuscripts as valuable objects for gifts. He searched for rare works to commission their duplication. At least sixteen manuscripts, dated between 1263 and 1289, are related to the activities of Hovhannes either as a scribe or as a commissioner, and sometimes both. He appears to have continued a family tradition. His father is recorded under the name Kostandin *tagavorahayr* (father of the king) as the commissioner of a Gospel book copied in Sis in 1237 (Matenadaran, MS 7700), and his brother Prince Vasak arkayeghbayr commissioned a Gospel (Jerusalem 2568), copied in Cilicia between 1270 and 1284. His brother Smbat the Constable, interested in non-biblical manuscripts, commissioned and owned a series of manuscripts, including at least one Gospel (Matenadaran, MS 7644) but also several works of Greek and Byzantine philosophy.[19]

In addition to Gospel books commissioned by Hovhannes (Matenadaran, MSS 197, 5525, 10773; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Arm. MS 1; Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institute, MS 56.11), which were the most frequent among the

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[18] Thierry, *Répertoire*, pp. 5-6 (MSS 13, 15, 18, 19).

[19] Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, pp. 86-87, with reference to Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "The Armenian Chronicle of the Constable Smpad or of the 'Royal Historian'," in *Etudes améniennes et byzantines—Byzantine and Armenian Studies* 1 (Louvain: Imp. orientaliste, 1973), p. 377.

precious manuscripts illuminated in Cilicia, together with complete or partial Bibles (Matenadaran, MSS 345, 4243; Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 376), he also copied or directed the copying of other works of various origins:

In Armenian:
- Exegetical commentaries by Nerses Shnorhali and Nerses of Lambron (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 458);
- Works of Georg Skevratsi or Grigor (Gregory) of Tatev (Matenadaran, MS 3710);
- Lectionary (Mekhitarist Library, Vienna, MS 245).

From Greek, among others:
- The Armenian version of the *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* by John Chrysostom (Matenadaran, MS 1315);
- *Demonstration* of Saint Irenaeus (Matenadaran, MS 3710);
- Works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 1515/1529);
- Works of Epiphanius of Cyprus (New Julfa, Church of All Savior, MS 88).

From Syriac:
- The *Commentary on the Psalms* by Daniel the Syrian (Bzommar Monastery Library, MS 120).

From Latin:
- *Dialogues* of Pope Gregory the Great and the *Rules* of Benedict in their Armenian rendition (Matenadaran, MS 4947).[20]

The contents of these manuscripts suggest that Hovhannes was perhaps primarily interested in organizing a monastic library.

The main activity of the scriptorium of Grner stopped after Hovhannes' death in 1289. Three non-illuminated manuscripts are

[20] On the Armenian version(s) of these texts and the role of Nerses Lambronatsi, see Ivan Havener, "An Early Haysmawurk': Life of Benedict of Nursia," *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 4 (1988-89): 183-207.

known to have been prepared thereafter,[21] and the scribes whose names were recorded in Grner moved to other places, like Sis, adding again to the perpetual turnover of Cilician scribes. Meanwhile, patronage by the Church diminished and was replaced by princely patronage, especially for illustrated manuscripts. King Levon II (1269-89) and his wife Queen Keran commissioned in 1272 the famous illustrated Gospel book (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 2563), which represents the finest manuscript of that period. Queen Keran sent the completed manuscript to the Monastery of Akner, a place with royal family connections and an important center for the duplication of manuscripts in Cilicia.[22] In 1215, two manuscripts appeared at Akner (Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 94 and Matenadaran, MS 947), both copied by the scribe Petros. These books contained collections of homilies (for example, by Severian of Gabala). Four years later but still in Akner, the homilies by Ephrem the Syrian were added to the collection of Severian in the Erevan manuscript (Matenadaran, MS 947). Scriptorial activity at Akner peaked during the second half of the thirteenth century and lasted until 1335. About twenty-five dated manuscripts are preserved from that period.

All the scriptoria mentioned thus far remained active in the fourteenth century. Colophons record the names of Grner, until 1304; possibly Mlitch, until 1307; Tarsus, 1316; Mashkevor, 1322; Drazark, 1331; Akner, 1335; and Hromkla, until 1357. Skevra and Drazark are attested during the entire first half of the fourteenth century, and Sis, until 1356, before a period of forty years of silence in the sources, which ends with colophons dated 1394 and 1397. The importance of Sis was partly because of the fact that it was the main residence of the famous painter Sargis Pitsak, whose works included nearly fifty manuscripts.[23]

There is also evidence of scriptoria activity around Adana during the early fourteenth century—for example, the monastic centers of Phos anapat,[24] Dzoroy vank,[25] and Miaketser vank.[26]

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[21] Gospel, 1292, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 1864; Gospel, 1293, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 2612; Bible, 1303-04, Matenadaran, MS 182.

[22] Thierry, *Répertoire*, p. 5 (MSS 12, 16).

[23] See the list of the manuscripts signed by Sargis Pitsak or attributed to him in Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, p. 142n94.

[24] Thierry, *Répertoire*, pp. 3, 4 (MSS 4 and 8). Manuscripts: Gospel, 1309, Church of Forty Martyrs, Aleppo, MS 47; Gospel, 1319, Patriarchate of Jerusalem,

Some manuscripts were prepared at the Monastery of Gaylu anapat (Matenadaran, MS 2388, dated 1325; Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 843/711, dated 1336), perhaps in the region of Adana, but it might also be identified with the Jermaghburi vank near Tarsus,[27] where manuscripts were copied in 1311 and 1328 (Matenadaran, MSS 154 and 2057, respectively). The same period is also marked by the close collaboration between Cilician scriptoria, especially Skevra, and the island of Cyprus. Stepanos Goyneritsants, one of the most important scribes at Skevra, also worked on the island of Cyprus in around 1307, copying several manuscripts he had brought with him from home.[28] Some manuscripts were copied jointly in Cilicia and Cyprus, such as a Gospel dated 1309 (Forty Martyrs Church, Aleppo, MS 47), and the New Testament of Erevan (Matenadaran, MS 242); the latter was copied in Cyprus in 1318 and later illustrated in Cilicia by Sargis Pitsak.

Characteristics of Cilician Manuscripts

As Armenian painters at times used Greek models, the Byzantine influence, as Sirarpie Der Nersessian and others have demonstrated, appears in some of the iconographic patterns in Cilician manuscripts.[29] Interest in Greek literary works prompted the copying of manuscripts containing Armenian translations of these

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MS 3294; Gospel, 1329, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 3345; Miscellaneous, 1329, Matenadaran, MS 3678; Gospel, 1335, Matenadaran, MS 6504; Hymnal, 1337, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 1914; Miscellaneous, Matenadaran, MS 866. Phos anapat appears as place of copy as early as 1222 (Gospel, manuscript, Case Memorial Library, Hartford Seminary Foundation, MS 1).

[25] Thierry, *Répertoire*, pp. 3-4 (MS 6). Manuscripts: Menologium, 1310-11, from a model copied in Sis in 1269, Catholicosate of Cilicia, Antelias, MS 1; Hymnal, 1325, Patriarchate of Jerusalem, MS 1566; Manrusmunk, 1326, Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 2152/709; John Chrysostom, 1329, Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 1521/1606; Gospel, 1334, Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 763/164; Catholicosate of Cilicia, Antelias, MS 86.

[26] Thierry, *Répertoire*, p. 168 (MS 938); Miaketser is known as the place of copy of one single manuscript, the Gospel book of Venice, Mekhitarist Library, MS 250/168, dated 1313.

[27] Thierry, *Répertoire*, pp. 54 (MS 285), 167 (MS 935).

[28] See Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, pp. 134, 136-38.

[29] Ibid., pp. 20, 29, 33, 104, 135-36, 169-75.

works. The lives of Armenian Church leaders and Greek saints were progressively included in the Armenian calendar by Grigor Vkayaser and his disciple Kirakos, a monk of Drazark.[30] Certain palaeographic trends also appeared in these manuscripts, especially in the development of the Cilician *bolorgir*, which some scholars relate to Greek miniature handwriting in Constantinople from the ninth century and which differs from the bolorgir utilized in manuscripts copied in Eastern Armenia during the same period.[31]

Attention to handwriting and the shape of letters represented one aspect of the Cilician scribes' search for quality in copying manuscripts. It was no coincidence that several treatises on the art of writing were composed in Cilicia, particularly at the scriptorium of Skevra. Two such treatises were composed there. The first is attributed to Aristakes, a scribe from Armenia and employed under the guidance of Grigor of Skevra in the late twelfth century. Later on, Gevorg of Skevra (circa 1204-1301) revised and completed Aristakes' treatise at the request of Stepanos Goyneritsants, one of the first scribes of his scriptorium.[32] These works, prepared for the scribes at the monastery, served practical purposes and listed a series of rules concerning the spelling or the hyphenation of words, the use of diacritics and of punctuation, and so forth. In his introduction, Aristakes states that he composed the work "at the request of many people."[33] To these Cilician productions must be added the *Meknutiun kerakani* (Commentary on Grammar) prepared by Vardan Areveltsi for King Hetum in the years 1244-46.[34]

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[30] Renoux, *lectionnaire*, pp. 38-460.

[31] See, for example, S.S. Manoukian, "L'art du livre en Cilicie et les traditions byzantines," in *L'Arménie et Byzance. Histoire et culture* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1996), pp. 127-34; Michael Stone, Dickran Kouymjian, and Henning Lehmann, *Album of Armenian Paleography* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2002), pp. 64, 73.

[32] Levon G. Khacheryan, *Grchutyan arvesti lezvakan-kerakanakan tesutyune mijnadaryan Hayastanum* [The Linguistic-Grammatical School of the Art of Writing in Armenia in the Middle Ages] (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1962), pp. 227-86, 287-320.

[33] Ibid., p. 227.

[34] Levon G. Khacheryan, ed., *Vardan Areveltsi: Meknutiun kerakani* [Vardan Areveltsi: Exposition on Grammar] (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1972), pp. 73-167.

The Cilician scribes paid great attention to details and while copying also introduced some changes. They considered such alterations as textual improvements, but which in fact became nightmares for Armenian philologists.[35] The Cilician scribes also exercised great care toward the illustrations adorning the manuscripts. Two aspects of the relationship between the text and illustrations are worth noting. First, many scribes were also painters, and many painters also copied the texts they illustrated. Toros Roslin and Sargis Pitsak were, of course, among the most famous of these professionals. Many others are also noted in the colophons as both scribes and painters (*grich* and *tsaghkogh*) as, for example, Kozma in the early thirteenth century and Stepanos Vahkatsi, a disciple of Hovhannes of Grner, who worked primarily in Sis in the second half of the thirteenth century. The second aspect concerns the motifs and themes common to the texts and images. Specialists in book illumination often forged the "pictorial exegesis" and "pictorial commentary" of Cilician painters such as Toros Roslin.[36] Such "pictorial commentary" at times adhered closely to the original text with only minor variants in the texts of the Gospels.[37]

The prevalent role of patronage represented another aspect of the development of the Cilician manuscripts. Members of the royal or princely families, or the Church hierarchy—and some patrons were both at the same time—continued to commission manuscripts (mostly illuminated ones) until the collapse of the Cilician kingdom in 1375. Colophons record the names of Nerses of Lambron and Nerses Shnorhali as patrons, as well as kings, queens, princes, and bishops. These individuals, through their familial relations, acted as groups or networks in commissioning the scribes and fostering scriptorial activities.

Extended patronage, along with the geographical and political situation peculiar to Armenian Cilicia, allowed the circulation of scribes and of books between the various centers. Scribes and artists frequently traveled from one place to another, and as a result their works were often commissioned by patrons residing in

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[35] See Egan, *Saint Ephrem*, pp. v ff.

[36] The expressions are found in Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, pp. 64, 70, respectively.

[37] Ibid., p. 116 (Matenadaran, MS 7651) and p. 119 (for Matenadaran, MS 979).

different places. Books were dispatched to be employed as models in other scriptoria. Further, colophons also reveal the forced migration by scribes who had to flee in the face of enemy incursions. In 1335, the scribe Simeon was compelled to move to three different places in order to complete the copy of a lectionary (missal) (Mekhitarist Library, Venice, MS 216/601). He wrote in his colophon: "This [book] has not been written in one place, but in various places because of the difficulty of the times and of the abundance of my sins, for in that year the nation which is called 'Kharaman' entered the land of Cilicia and caused much damage everywhere."[38]

Continuous exchange of goods and ideas took place in Cilician Armenia during the period under study. There were, of course, other centers as well where Armenian manuscripts were copied in that period: Cyprus, Jerusalem, the regions of Lake Van, Erznka, Gladzor, Sanahin, Haghbat, Artaz, and Tabriz. Even Rome, among others, is recorded in contemporary colophons as hosting productive Armenian scriptoria. A colophon in a manuscript of Tübingen (Tübingen University Library, MS 1398) containing a ritual copied in the town of Fabriano, near Ancona, Italy, in 1319, gives the usual chronological pieces of information both according to the Cilician data—naming the Armenian Oshin and the Catholicos Kostandin III Kesaratsi—and to the reigning Pope John XXII: "The achievement of this [book] occurred in the land of the Franks when the Lord Kostan was the patriarch of the Armenians and Oshin was reigning over the Armenians, and John was the pontiff of the Franks; it was copied in the city of Phaphrian in the house of the Armenians under the protection of the Holy Spirit in the year of the Armenians 768 [+551 = 1319]."[39]

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[38] Sahak Chemchemian, *Mayr tsutsak hayeren dzeragrats matenadaranin Mkhitariants i Venetik* [Grand Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts at the Mekhitarist Library in Venice], vol. 4 (Venice: Mekhitarist Library, 1993), col. 655.

[39] Julius Assfalg and Joseph Molitor, *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland*, vol. 4: *Armenische Handschriften* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag, 1962), pp. 76-80. See also, for a western influence, Sylvie Merian, "Cilicia as the Locus of European Influence on Medieval Armenian Books Production," *Armenian Review* 45 (Winter 1992): 61-72. For an eastern influence, see Dickran Kouymjian, "Chinese Elements in Armenian Miniature Painting in the Mongol Period," *Armenian Studies/Etudes Arméniennes: In Memoriam Haïg Berbérian*, ed. Dickran Kouymjian (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1986), pp. 415-68.

Far from being confined to an isolated region, Cilician manuscripts were offered to monasteries or to private or public persons and sent abroad as models for further copies. They thus escaped the destruction experienced in Cilicia. Several Cilician books were recorded in Sebastia, like the Gospel painted by Toros Roslin in 1262 (Blois, MS 539) which served as a model for a Gospel copied at Nor Avan in 1668-73 (Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institute, MS 36.15). Cilician manuscripts most likely also appeared in the library of the Monastery of the Surb Nshan (Holy Sign) in Sebastia in the seventeenth century. Besides, one should remember that it was at the request of the bishop Stepanos of Sebastia that in 1320 Sargis Pitsak added the paintings of the Gospel of Erevan (Matenadaran, MS 7651).[40] Another place where Cilician manuscripts were sent was the Crimea. The Gospel of Constable Smbat (Matenadaran, MS 7644) was brought to Surkhat before 1420. Interestingly, the oldest dated copies of the treatises on the art of writing by Aristakes and Gevorg of Skevra and of the grammar by Vardan Areveltsi are preserved in a manuscript copied in 1357 in Surkhat (Matenadaran, MS 2371).[41] As a whole, the importance of the Crimean scriptoria deserves closer attention.

Conclusion

The history of manuscript production is closely related to Armenian history at large because the activity of the scriptoria depended on the political and economic situation, on the fate of the prominent families, and on the orientation of the Church. The history of such centers and manuscripts mirrored the history of Cilician Armenia and of the Armenian people. They increased in number and quality in periods of stability and prosperity; they vanished in times of wars and persecutions. But many are still present today to witness Armenian cultural and spiritual life.

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[40] Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, pp. 29, 33n216, 104, 142n94, 169-75.

[41] See also Artashes S. Matevosyan, *Hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner, XIII dar* [Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 13th Century] (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1984), p. 868 (MS 702). On Matenadaran manuscript MS 2371, see also Hayk Amalyan, "Hayereni arajin ughghagrakan bararane" [The First Armenian Dictionary of Spelling], *Banber Matenadarani* 6 (1962): 121-33.